

# **Utah Unemployment Insurance Strategic Direction**

Fiscal Year 2009

**For FY 2009, Utah has established strategic goals and directions that will:**

- (1) Increase access and improve service to Utah Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants and employers
- (2) Ensure UI benefits are paid and contributions collected in a timely and accurate manner
- (3) Improve UI benefit overpayment detection, collection and fraud prosecution
- (4) Continue to monitor and improve its strong record of quality performance and
- (5) Strengthen data system security.

## ***Utah's Strategic Direction***

Improving the security of our service delivery and achieving even greater efficiencies through technology and process improvement will be a major focus in FY 2009.

In an effort to provide customers with convenient, accessible, responsive, and personalized service, we are dedicated to design, develop, and implement a national UI Separation Information Data Exchange System (SIDES). Utah is one of the five consortium states participating in this project; the development, integration, testing and implementation should be complete by early 2009. This system will provide large employers and third party administrators a tool for receiving and responding to UI separation information electronically in a nationally recognized format. These enhanced services will benefit Utah employers, claimants, and UI program managers by improving service while saving time and money. Adjudicators will be able to enhance the timelines of adjudication decisions through ready access to information vital to making adjudication decisions. Employers and claimants will have convenient, expanded access to claims and separation information through the web, thereby maximizing limited UI staff resources. UI customers will be enabled to address issues or access services online outside of "normal business hours."

In order to increase efficiency and security of our service delivery through technology and process improvement, we are evaluating our current UI Profile Model to implement changes that will enhance its effectiveness in scoring claimant's probability of exhaustion of their benefits. In conjunction with this, a new automated system is being built which will enable profiled claimants to complete basic reemployment activities online. The online system will identify barriers to employment more efficiently during the self-assessment and orientation process as well as direct claimants to other reemployment services through a DWS One Stop Center. Employment counselors will then be able to focus more on those claimants with the most serious barriers. Utah will also implement a program that links profiled claimants to our existing Eligibility Review process to further enhance our reemployment support.

Another process improvement initiative we are implementing is the Collections Case Management System (CCMS). The CCMS will improve efficiency through an automated wage garnishment system that will select accounts for potential garnishment, create documents, monitor and notify staff of payment status, and electronically process the

documents through the courts. This new system will save the department time, money, and man-hours by moving time consuming tasks into an automated system that will implement these processes automatically.

Goals have been set to reduce postage costs and provide increased service by developing an electronic correspondence “opt-in” system that will allow both claimants and employers to automatically receive UI notices electronically, and access claims and separation information through the web. Not only will this technology reduce money spent on postage it will also maximize limited UI staff resources, and ensure more convenient access to time sensitive information.

### ***Program Performance***

Utah has been a national leader in its UI program performance for many years. We are consistently ranked in the top 10 states in most core measures and other program performance measures. We anticipate that with the systems we have in place and the continual development of new systems, our focus on performance management and our commitment to process improvements, we will continue to improve. We are committed to exceed all Department of Labor (DOL) performance standards that are set.

### ***Federal Emphasis and GPRA Goals***

Utah is meeting the following goals established by the DOL and required by Congress under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, for the annual measurement period ending 3/31/2008:

- Utah is currently detecting 94.5 percent of its estimated detectable, recoverable overpayments for the three years ending 3-31-2008; the national target is established at 50 percent. This score indicates two important objectives are being met: (1) Utah is doing a very good job detecting overpayments. (2) We have a relatively low rate of operational overpayments. Utah has implemented nine automated cross matches to identify and prevent potential benefit overpayments.
- Utah was able to reemploy 70.3 percent of Utah UI beneficiaries by the end of the first quarter after the quarter in which they received their first payment and anticipates no problem in meeting the 65.3 percent target in FY2009. As noted on page one, Utah’s development of a system to automate basic reemployment services on profiled UI claimants and integration to our existing on-line Eligibility Review process should further enhance our reemployment activities.
- Utah made 95.6 percent of first benefit payments within 14/21 days. Utah should have no problem exceeding the GPRA goal of 88.5 percent in the next measurement period. Utah was ranked fifth nationally for the annual period ending March 31, 2008. Utah will continue to follow the same processes that have led to excellent outcomes in the past.
- Utah is establishing new employer accounts within 90 days 93.1 percent of the time and anticipates no problem exceeding the goal of 85.1 percent in the next

measurement period. Utah was ranked fourth nationally for the annual period ending March 31, 2008. Utah's recent employer registration web enhancements and One Stop Business Registration (OSBR) web portals have proven to be effective and should again ensure excellent outcomes in the coming year.

### ***Customer Satisfaction Strategy***

In an effort to improve claimant usage of the internet, a survey was created to assist UI claimants in giving us feedback which was instrumental in helping us improve our internet initial claims system. The improvements enhance the web system's usability for the claimant. Utah also has plans to create a web-based customer satisfaction survey that can be taken by claimants after they have filed their claims on the internet to facilitate further improvements.

### ***Trust Fund Solvency***

Utah remains committed to the ongoing protection and integrity of the UI Trust Fund. Currently the average high cost multiple for Utah is 1.47, this means Utah is prepared to cover benefits for approximately 18 months in case of a sudden increase in unemployment, and is currently ranked as one of the top ten states with respect to UI trust fund solvency. Utah will continue to implement effective practices and policies to maintain the unemployment insurance trust fund's solvency. Initiatives to support this critical objective include:

- Continued use of SUTA dumping detection software to help detect and prevent unlawful manipulation of employer UI tax rates.
- Expanded usage of IRS Form 1099 miscellaneous extract tapes to help develop audit target lists of employers who may be misclassifying their workers as "independent contractors."
- Continued and expanded usage of the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) for the detection, prevention, and collection of UI benefit overpayments.
- Increased usage of data cross-matches to aid in the detection and prevention of identity theft and fraudulent benefit overpayments. Cross matching UI benefits data with SSA, drivers licenses, prisons, mailing addresses, phone numbers, Internet addresses, and other data further enhances our ability to safeguard the UI Trust Fund.
- Enhanced UI collection efforts including employer garnishments, and bank withholds utilizing electronic court filing technology.
- Expanded data sharing agreements to share information on misclassified workers with other state and federal partners to help leverage our limited compliance resources.